

Preamble

WHEREAS, Recent studies have identified a critical shortage of health care providers in many professional, technical, and supporting roles in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, The scheduled return from duty or retirement of military personnel with experience in providing health care will create an opportunity for reducing the shortage of health care providers in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, The Base Realignment and Closure process will bring tens of thousands of skilled professionals including health care providers to Maryland; and

WHEREAS, The Governor's Workforce Investment Board and other entities have identified various barriers to licensing returning military personnel as health care providers in professional, technical, and supporting roles; and

WHEREAS, Removing the identified barriers in licensing returning military personnel as health care providers will reduce the shortage of health care workers and alleviate the insufficient staffing of health care facilities including acute hospital emergency rooms and other units and in community-based medical care settings; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

(a) The Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, in conjunction with the Governor's Workforce Investment Board and the appropriate regulatory boards for health care providers, ~~shall identify~~ shall:

(1) make findings regarding the barriers under the Health Occupations Article to licensing or certifying individuals who have training and experience in providing health care through military service that is equivalent to the training and experience required for licensure or certification under the Health Occupations Article; and

(2) report to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Health and Government Operations Committee on or before December 1, 2007, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, findings and recommendations regarding the most appropriate ways to expedite the inclusion of individuals who have training and experience in providing health care through military service into the State's health care work force.

~~(b) (1) In response to the identification of barriers under subsection (a) of this section, the regulatory boards shall draft regulations and legislation that will~~